

A THANKSGIVING FEAST.



I'm waiting my house for Thanksgiving. I thought last night, as I lay awake in my bed and wondering for the twinkling of the day, how my heart would leap in gladness if a letter should come this morn'g to say that they could not leave in here to keep the feast festive.

Samuel, my son in Dakota, is a rich man, as I hear, and he'll never let me want approach us. Save the wanting of him near: While Jack is in San Francisco, and Edward over the sea, and only my little Jessie is hiding at home with me.

And I feel like poor Naomi. Who thought to her own she went, and they said: "Is this Naomi?" She well knew what that meant. I've staid, and the birds have wandered, and the time that was swift to go. When I was with and busy, I lagged and still and slow.

Oh! the happy time for a mother—As when her babies are small, And into the nursery looks at night. She gathers her darlings all: When the wee ones are about her, With gleeful noise and cry, And she blisses the tumult with a smile, Her brood beneath her eye.



THE HAPPY TIME FOR A MOTHER.

But a mother must bear her burden. When her babes are bearded men, Or change and in the army, Or scratching away with a pen In some banker's dusty office, As Martin is, no doubt—A mother must bear her burden, And learn to do without.

I know the Scripture teaching. To keep the heart and blind, And the homelike and the desolate, At the festive hour in mind. Of the fat and the sweet's portion, I'll send to the poor man's door, But I'm swaying for my children To sit at my board once more.

I tell you, Jessie, my darling, This living for money and pelf, It takes the heart from life, dear: It robs a man of himself. This old black bill-side hamlet, That sends its boys away, Has a right to claim them back, dear, On the fair Thanksgiving day.

Shame on my foolish fretting! Here are letters, a perfect sheaf; Open them quickly, dearest! Ah me, 'tis beyond belief. By ship and train they're hustening, Rushing along on the way. Tell the neighbors off my children, We'll be here Thanksgiving day.

—Harper's Bazar.

THE RAREST FEAST.

"We'll have a goose tomorrow, ma—Thanksgiving day, you know—All have Josiah's folks come down!" That's what I said, but you, Ma, how'd that turkey'd be the best, An' said it out so fat.

It raised my grit, an' so I says: "Well, now, just think o' that!" That old gray goose is fit to kill, An' just the thing to eat. For such a day, when folks'll want To have some kind o' treat.

"Whoever heard," says ma again, "O' havin' Thanksgiving meal Without a turkey, roasted hull!" But I turns up my heel.

An' I starts up toward the door, 'n' says: "Oh, talkin' ain't no use, But common sense is on my side, 'N' I shall kill that goose." Jus' then I looked at little May Who sat there in her chair, Just like she alters had to set (She couldn't stir from there).

An' then I says: "Well, little one, You settle this dispute!" (For she was talkin' with her eyes, Although her lips was mute). "What'll we have to-morrow, dear? Now, you shall have your say." She looks up, shy, an' says out soft: "Let's have Thanksgiving day!"

Well, you can guess that little speech Has stayed with us an' me. Though she that said it's gone away To where she's well 'n' free. Thanksgiving's come again, an' we Jus' think of little May, So we don't worry 'bout the food, But have—Thanksgiving day.

—Myrtle K. Cherryman, in Detroit Free Press.



BETTER SHE THAN SHE KNEW.

Slender were the facilities at Felton Falls for showing him off, while great was his aunt's ambition on that score. Some means must be found for bringing him into the focus of the Robinsons, who had just settled in the place, and were reputed very rich and refined people.

If you have ever been at Felton Falls you will recollect that as you come up from the little railroad station and leave behind the cluster of dwellings with a single white spire pointing upward from their midst, Mrs. Jones' ornate cottage comes into view, standing on the right hand of the road; and a short distance beyond, along the plain upon your left, rises by far the most pretentious residence of the place: close beyond which again is a cottage so humble as to seem poorly worth considering except for the connection its inmates have with this veracious tale.

It was to the house beautiful that the Robinsons had come. It had been built two years before, but never occupied, for the reason that its owner died at the very time it was completed, and it had taken the interval to settle the estate. Now it is well known that not even a melon patch or fruit trees in their season of luxury are more irresistible to raiding youngsters than is a vacant dwelling, however inexplicable the fact may be. The incoming family could hardly have been aware of the abuse the fine house had suffered, or they would have given it three weeks' grace in the hands of the repairers, instead of calling it home and afterward putting it into a homelike condition, especially with the husband and father an invalid, and just at Thanksgiving time.

In the small house nestled so near the large one lived Mrs. Brown and her daughter—"poor but respectable." Being Mrs. Jones' nearest neighbor hither, Mrs. Brown had received many attentions from that rich but respectable lady. But one day, alas! earlier in the year of which we are speaking, there came a breach of friendship. Their trouble began in the sewing circle, and Mrs. Brown was irreverent enough to say even in the church vestry that Mrs. Jones was no more than a purse-proud aristocrat, and she wanted no more of her patronizing. This was repeated to Mrs. Jones, and the neighbors all at once ceased to be neighbors.

To return to Thanksgiving eve at Mrs. Jones'. Brice Bellingham had scarcely been an hour in the house when he followed his aunt to the kitchen—feeling already privileged—and found her standing at a table packing a hamper with such provisions as grace the cuisine of the well-to-do when a Thanksgiving dinner is in course of preparation. Conspicuous among these were a fat turkey, stuffed and made ready for the roasting pan, two mince pies of glorious diameter, and a



BRICE STOOD TRANSFIXED

head of celery beautifully bleached and of a quality to almost melt in the mouth.

"Ah," exclaimed Brice, "my good aunt is on benevolent thought intent, if I read the signs correctly. Now so far as a good dinner goes," he went on, smiling and watching the basket, "I might as well be some poor neighbor of yours as to be what I am, your adoring nephew."

"I have a neighbor who is not an object of charity," began Mrs. Jones, "or would not be but for present difficulties. I wanted to lend a hand but am feeling dubious at the prospect. My man Peter drove away this afternoon for Hossie, with directions in case of not finding there what he was sent for to go on to Parkboro. It looks as if he had gone on, otherwise he would have been at home before this; and if so he will come too late to carry out my basket to-night. I should prefer on several accounts to send it under cover of dusk. I have let Bridget go to spend to-morrow with her cousin's, and Mary has lamed her foot; so there is no one—"

"Pray, aunt, allow me to be your almoner," interrupted Brice, eagerly. "I will manage to turn it into an adventure, to tell at the club when I get back to town."

Aunt Jones could not resist his persuasive eloquence, that so well harmonized with her desires, and consented with thanks expressed and unexpressed—her dinner device including rather more than she chose to tell. With the knowledge that the "unexpected" had happened to the new family in the non-arrival of servants, this method of leaping into free relations with them had suggested itself; that she looked forward with satisfaction to the stingy jealousy poor Mrs. Brown would feel—her unhappiness and only share in the social intercommunication going on before her eyes—was Mrs. Jones' own secret. In her strained relations with Mrs. Brown, she hoped that person

would see what she had brought upon herself, and she had no idea of conquering a peace by milder measures. An outline of the existing state of things with the Robinson family that his aunt gave Brice by way of preliminary to his undertaking was to the exhilaration of the hour as good as lost upon him—it went in at one ear and out at the other, as the saying is.

"If you should get a glimpse of one of those pretty young ladies," finally remarked Aunt Jones, balancing the burden on an arm fairly well equipped with muscle through athletic exercise—her smile was a captivating finish to the sentence.

Immediately the young man was off on his errand under the starry canopy of the broad country skies, finding the situation, taken in all its bearings, sufficiently novel and even intoxicating. He had forgotten to don his goggles, and tramped through miry places regardless of the fact that a "shine" was no more to be had at Felton Falls than was a chariot of the Pharaohs. As he was about to turn in at the mansion gate, he made the discovery that the name of the people to whom he had been sent had dropped out of his mind.

"'Twas something common—very," reflected the nephew of his aunt in striving to remind himself—"not Smith, though. No matter—it's gone from me; I will inquire for the lady of the house, or bridge the difficulty some other way. If I blunder, these children of the frontier won't know it. Well—but how is this?—I am blundering woefully already."

Brice had surprised himself facing a low, broad flight of marble steps conducting to a stately veranda supported by Corinthian columns, with French windows uncurtained and unlighted staring across at him. The truth was that the family were meeting their exigencies in the rear rooms as quietly as possible. Brice had good reason for thinking nobody lived there; and he added—oblivious of his aunt's explanations—that neither was this a home to welcome donations for the mortal body. What was it his aunt had said about a house that had suffered from ill-usage, and that sort of thing?

In returning toward the gate Brice got his first view of the cottage, crouching in the shadow of the grander edifice, and for a moment stood transfixed. At a little window sat a young woman sewing by the light of a lamp that presented her clear-cut portrait to the beholder. "This is the place, of course, and that the pretty girl," thought the young man. His memory had been faithful where a pretty girl was concerned. He passed into the road. A lad was seen approaching who just then broke into whistling a popular tune—a kind of proclamation of innocence, probably, in regard to the desecration

turned away as hastily as if each moment were precious.

Aunt Jones sat building air castles when Brice reentered, coming his fingers through his dark curling locks and announcing triumphantly—as if the experience had not taken his breath away, "I saw her, sure enough, aunt."

"Which one?" was inquired. "Oh, then there are more of her! The lovely girl who received your Thanksgiving offering with such grace may be about quitting her teens, I should say."

"Yes, that is she," responded the other, smiling her gratification. "Alma is her name. There is a married daughter, I have heard, and there are twins of fourteen or fifteen. When you come again, Brice, say before the holidays are over, I will have the young lady and her mother to tea. Miss Alma is said to be very accomplished and charming. I expect to be on terms of intimacy with them directly."

At this interesting point a rumble of wheels came to their ears, and Mrs. Jones and Brice Bellingham hurried forth to welcome a carriage full of friends—further arrivals in honor of the occasion. From that hour until another nightfall joy and duty centered in themselves.

It was Thanksgiving night and Mrs. Jones was temporarily alone, Brice having gone to the station to witness the departure, as he said, of all but himself.

A boy, the same whom Brice had met on the road—the too early inheritor of his father's greatness in trousers—rang the bell and put into the mistress' hand a note. With a glance at the neat superscription she opened and read:

"DEAR MRS. JONES: With respect to me to express her almost painfully deep sense of your goodness in making so beautiful provision for our wants on this over-favorite anniversary, adding also that you will in the same Christian spirit forget as you have evidently forgiven all words and acts which have disturbed your friendly intercourse and been a source of infinite regret to her."

"I am gratefully and respectfully yours."

"MARY J. BROWN."

Thrice the bewildered recipient read this missive; then the truth flashed upon her. But even at this point she was rather overwhelmed with humiliation than sorry for the mistake her messenger had made in the delivery of her Thanksgiving supplies. The apparent error struck her as an interposition of Providence, the wisdom whereof she durst not question. "The woman need not ask my pardon," she murmured with bowed head; "I have been far more at fault than she in this quarrel that night, if it had gone on, infected the whole parish."

Brice Bellingham on his return from the station noted his aunt's air of abstraction, attributing it to the departure of those dear to her heart, and the uncertainties that attend our fleeting years, also doubtless to tender associations of the day with kindred and friends who were now only a blessed memory.

How Mrs. Jones builded better than she knew, and what share his ridiculous inadvertence had had in the transforming of events, Brice never dreamed. No, not even when a year later his marriage was celebrated in that lady's smiling presence, and he bore away his bride (guess whom?) the proudest and the happiest man who ever breathed the atmosphere of Felton Falls.—Lavinia S. Goodwin, in Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

Threads of Thought for Thanksgiving.

Offer thanks and give thank offerings. Be grateful for life, if for nothing else.

Be like the harvest of the year, good and generous.

Kind wishes are good, but good deeds are better.

Our deeds seal our words in the record of our lives.

Let words and deeds be the signal lights of your faith.

Give, now, to the living. You cannot send your gifts beyond the grave.

The little acts of kindness count high in the book of remembrance.

Heaven's twin angels, Love and Pity, whisper in our hearts: "Remember others."

If you have not gifts of gold to bestow donate gems of kind words.—De troit Free Press.

A THANKSGIVING FAIR.



The greedy turkey gobbled up the goodly fare and grew fatter, day by day, but the proudest turkey, suspicious of such bountiful grub, refused to eat it, and grew rapidly thinner.

Finally the master came and said: "Better keep the fat turkey for Christmas; if we do not kill the thin turkey, he may die on our hands."—Brooklyn Life.

For His Health.

Mrs. Hen—"Why don't you come out from under the barn? They are throwing corn out and all the fowls are there."

Mr. Turkey—"Thanks; I'm here for my health at this time of year."—Minneapolis Journal.

Young Benedict's Trial.

Although he wears a smiling face His bumper's somewhat jerky, For well he knows that after grace He'll have to carve the turkey!

—Judge

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